

On behalf of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway) would like to update the record in support of the FCC designation of abbreviated dialing codes; in particular 511.

MassHighway, and its private sector partner SmartRoute Systems, has operated a traveler information number in the Greater Boston area since 1993. Since that time, it has received more than 40 million calls, averaging over 500,000 calls per month over the last two years. Based on the success of this program, MassHighway plans to convert the existing telephone numbers (cellular and landline) to the consolidated 511 number and expand the coverage area statewide. Given the rapid growth of communications technology and the public demand for real-time information on everything ranging from traffic and weather conditions to homeland security, the availability of a single, nationally recognized telephone number will enhance the governments ability to provide services to the traveling public, increase their mobility and ensure their safety.

In summary, the Commonwealth commends the actions of the FCC regarding the designation of 511 as a dedicated number for the public to obtain traveler information, and we look forward to realizing the potential benefits that 511 will bring to Massachusetts.